AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line18, as follows:

It is well known to bond a noble metal chip to a center or ground electrode only by laser welding, as shown in JP-A-6-45050. However, in a case of bonding only by laser welding, the noble metal chip has to be held by a holding jig or tool when the chip is bonded by laser welding. Accordingly, a construction of a laser welding equipment becomes ~~complicate~~ complicated.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 1, as follows:

However, when the noble metal chips are bonded to the respective center or ground electrodes provisionally by a conventional resistance welding method, in which ~~that only~~ a current amount to be supplied and a time period for current supply are controlled at preset ~~values~~ values, and finally by a conventional laser welding method, bonding strength of the noble metal chips to the respective center or ground electrodes is likely to fluctuate.

Please amend the paragraphs appearing at page 2, line 17 – page 3, line 10, as follows:

The experimental test result further reveals that, when the resistance welding on the noble metal chips is implemented under conditions that the current amount to be supplied and the time period for current supply are constant, the embedding length of the noble metal chips into the center or ground electrodes ~~is fluctuated~~ fluctuates because of, for example, uneven surface roughness of cutting surfaces of the noble

metal chips or uneven surface roughness of surfaces of the center or ground electrodes, on which the noble metal chips are placed, respectively.

When the noble metal chip, for example, including Ir as a main composition and having a high melting point, is fixed by resistance welding, surface roughness of the surface on which the noble metal chip and the center or ground electrode are in contact with each other largely affects ~~on~~ heat energy to be generated on a boundary surface between the noble metal chip and the center or ground electrode. Therefore, the resistance welding at the constant current amount and the constant time period is not sufficient enough to secure a stable and accurate embedding length of the noble metal chip into the center or ground electrode.